

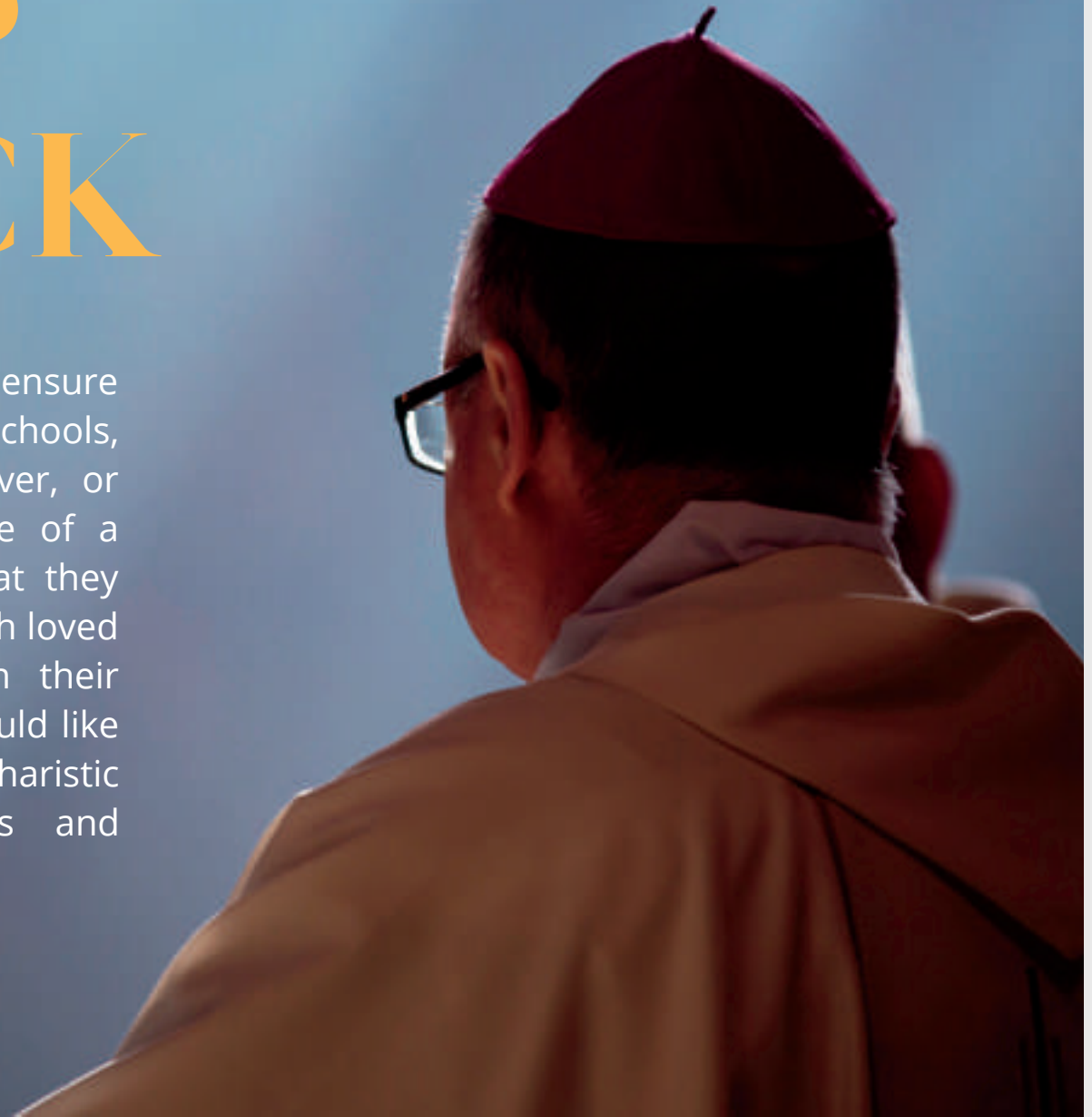
encounter

*a message from*

# BISHOP PATRICK

First of all, encounter: I would like to ensure that people of all ages in our parishes, schools, and chaplaincies are helped to discover, or discover more deeply, the importance of a personal encounter with Christ; so that they can become convinced that they are each loved by God and are invited to grow in their relationship with him. In particular I would like to see the development of times of Eucharistic Adoration in our parishes, schools and chaplaincies.

**Bishop Patrick McKinney**



*a message from*

# POPE FRANCIS

Our faith is nothing without this personal encounter with God. And how does one do such a thing? In prayer, yes. By going to church, yes. But more important than either of those things: by allowing ourselves to encounter God in one another.

**Pope Francis**



# HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

*and what is in it*

Welcome to the Encounter Him resource, designed to support you in enabling your young people to have a personal Encounter with Jesus through a range of themes.

The first part of this resource sets out some topics which you could use in an act of worship, in activities in the chapel or in classrooms or tutor groups. They are topics which fit with the time of the school and liturgical year and which we thought you might cover anyway, so we hope we've provided some useful resource which you, your chaplaincy team or staff might be able to use.

The second half of the resource uses the words set out in the 'Extra-or-do-nary' calendar from NDCYS, with a page of suggestions, hyper-linked resources, activities and missions for each word in the build up to, and during, Advent. Each week includes a video which summarises the theme of the week and gives the mission, explaining how young people can get involved in it.

We hope 'Encounter Him' supports you, your staff and your young people in exploring the theme of Encounter during the Advent term and in growing closer to Jesus individually and as a community.

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Mary & The Saints - Traditionally, we think about and ask Mary to intercede for us during the month of October. How can we use the example of Mary, and the Saints, to help us to grow closer in our Encounter with Jesus?

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# ADVENT TERM 1 *resources*



**'What is Encounter? What does it mean?'** This video, featuring some of our Lay Chaplains, Lead Lay Chaplains and colleagues from NDCYS, explores the theme and its importance.

[PRIMARY VIDEO](#) | [SECONDARY VIDEO](#)

## ADORATION

Eucharistic Adoration is a really clear way for us to Encounter Him, to come physically close to Jesus. Could you talk to your Lay Chaplain or Lead Lay Chaplain about organising to have some sessions of Adoration in school this term as a lovely way for your young people to Encounter Him? [Here is a resource which explains all about how it could work.](#)





**CLICK THE ICON FOR A COLLECTION OF WEEKLY  
VIDEOS WITH JAMIE, HANNAH AND TOM**

# WELCOME

Our theme of welcome is all about recognising that our God is a welcoming God. He welcomes all into his family. While he lived on earth, Jesus always welcomed anyone into his presence. With Jesus as our example, we should always try to welcome others. Whether it's welcoming friends into our home, visitors into our church, or just saying hello to a stranger on the street, as Christians we should display the welcoming attitude of God in all we say and do. [Click here for a full Encounter resource on the theme of 'Welcome'](#)

*Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.*  
(Romans 15:7)

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*  
(Galatians 3:28)

*And thus you shall greet him: 'Peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have.'*  
(1 Samuel 25:6)

*Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.*  
(Romans 15:7)





## MISSION *suggestions*

Consider how you are a messenger of Christ – to your family, your colleagues, your neighbours, and your friends. How can you make others become convinced that they are each loved by God and invited to grow in their relationship with him?

Can you write an affirmation letter for others in your class so that they know how much God loves them?

Can you think of some examples of times when Jesus made people feel welcome and loved, and prepare an assembly for your whole school on this theme?

Create welcome postcards for visitors to your school with scripture quotations so that people know God's love for them.

Create a welcome pack for new starters to your school.

Create welcome posters for different clubs in your school for new members.

Design welcome window stickers so that people walking past know that God loves them.



**'WELCOME'**

# CARE OF CREATION

One way we get to encounter God and Jesus is through God's creation, the natural world. When we read the creation story in Genesis, we hear that 'the Spirit of God was moving over the water.' (Genesis 1:2)

*In Laudato Si, Pope Francis refers to the spirituality of his namesake Saint Francis who: 'invites us to see nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us and grants us a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness.'*

***'Through the greatness and the beauty of creatures one comes to know by analogy their maker.'* (Wisdom 13:5)**

*This means that when we experience the natural world, we are having a direct encounter with God, we are 'coming to know God'. However, this encounter is not a one-way experience as it involves us in a very personal way. We are able to live off the natural world from the food and water it provides, we are spiritually renewed as we spend time in nature and we care for nature as we work to care and protect it.*

*In 2015 Pope Francis said: 'The annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation (1st September) will offer individual believers and communities a fitting opportunity to reaffirm their personal vocation to be stewards of creation.'*

*This means that starting on 1st September until 4th October (the memorial of Saint Francis of Assisi - the patron saint of nature), we can spend particular time encountering God through creation.*

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SEASON OF CREATION](#)



## MISSION *suggestions*

Join your school's eco team.

Take some time out of your day between 1st September to 4th October to walk in your local park or take a few moments to thank God for the flowers growing in your garden.

Take photographs of the natural world and make a collage of them for a school display around the words of Saint Francis, 'Praise be to you my Lord, through our sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us.'

You could pray a novena (nine days of prayer in a row) to Saint Francis.

Pray the Joyful mysteries of the Rosary for the care of creation.

EXPLORE THE THEME OF CARE OF CREATION MORE



'CARE OF  
CREATION'

# MARY & THE SAINTS

Mary is a wonderful example of how we can Encounter Jesus through our actions and by saying yes to him. October is the month of the Holy Rosary, and of Mary, so this is a perfect time for us to think about how we can learn from Mary and to ask Mary, in our prayers, to intercede for us, and to pass on our prayers to her son, Jesus.

*The saints are also a fantastic example to us of how to be closer to God. Lots of the saints were very normal people, who made lots of mistakes, but still managed to live good and holy lives. To see how to explore more of this with your young people, [take a look at this resource.](#)*

*Let's find out more about Mary. Create a mindmap or a poster about Mary. Using bible stories to work out what kind of person Mary is, write down the words which describe her and then a sentence to show how we could follow her example. Here are some bible stories which you could use:*

*The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38) Luke 1:26-38 GNT - The Birth of Jesus Is Announced  
Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth (Luke 1: 39-56) Luke 1:39-56 GNT - Mary Visits Elizabeth - Soon afterward  
Mary attends a wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11) John 2:1-11 GNT - The Wedding in Cana - Two days later  
Mary at the Crucifixion (John 19:21-27) John 19:25-27 GNT - Standing close to Jesus' cross were*



## MISSION *suggestions*

Could you set up a Rosary Club during October?  
[Here is a resource to help you with that](#)

Mary said 'yes' to becoming the mother of Jesus.  
This month, maybe you could make a promise to  
say yes to God more often.

Can you think of some examples for your class of  
a 'yes' which they could say each day which would  
help them to Encounter Him?

[LOOKING FOR A BIBLE REFERENCE? CLICK HERE](#)



**'MARY &  
THE SAINTS'**

# ADVENT TERM 2

## *resources*



In this section of the 'Encounter Him' resource, we take a look at the theme of the week from our Extraordinary calendar each week in the build up to, and during, Advent. We think about what that theme means, how it might help us to 'Encounter Him' and give you some videos to watch, scripture to listen to and some activities and missions to complete, to help you to explore the theme and grow closer to God.



ADVENT TERM 2  
*resources*

# HOLINESS



Our theme this week is Holiness. We are all called to Holiness and all are called to live a life pleasing to God. It is easy to think that we are not 'good enough' to be holy. However, the saints are a really good example to us that we can be; lots of the saints made lots and lots of mistakes along the way, and still managed to be holy enough to become a saint! A saint is one of those men or women who in their life, and often their death, set an example of how to live for God. They give hope to us all that we can be better people, and one day even become saints ourselves!

## SEE

*Saint Paul is someone who, like all of the saints, is holy and close to God. It is easy to assume, especially as Paul wrote letters which are not part of the bible, that Paul was always holy, and never got anything wrong. But this isn't the case. Paul used to be called Saul, and lived a life which was not very holy at all. [Find out a bit more about Saul, and his conversion to Paul here](#)*

### Discussion points

- *What was Paul's life like before his conversion? Would you have described him as holy?*
- *Have you ever had a moment like this? A time when you've realised you've been doing something wrong?*
- *What does this story teach us about our ability to change, and God's willingness to forgive us?*

## HEAR

*Listen to 'Blinded by your Grace - part 2' by Stormzy (and maybe look at the lyrics - [click here](#))*

*Are there any saints which you can think of whom the song could be about? How could this song encourage us to keep trying to be holy?*

## THINK

*Schools in our diocese are split up into three CMATs who each have a patron saint - someone whose example we could follow to help us Encounter God. They are: Our Lady of Lourdes, Saint Thomas Aquinas, and Saint Ralph Sherwin. Could you find out more about the patron saint of your CMAT and plan a liturgy, create some posters, or plan an activity in the chapel to help the rest of the young people in your school to learn more about them and how we can follow their example? Our Lady said yes to God and followed his path, even when it was very hard to do. How can you use this as an example?*

*Saint Thomas Aquinas gave us a set of virtues to live by. Could you find out about these and think about how following these could help us to Encounter Jesus?*

*Saint Ralph Sherwin left us with the message 'Today, not tomorrow', encouraging us to act as soon as we see things that need doing.*



## DO

Make some 'sacrifice beads' at home or in school

[CLICK HERE FOR THE INSTRUCTIONS](#)

## MISSION *suggestions*

Use your sacrifice beads to follow the example of a CMAT saint, or Saint Therese of Lisieux. Here is how you could do that:

- Our Lady of Lourdes: Move a bead along each time you say yes to God, or carry on with something even if it is tough. Try to get to ten by the end of the week.
- Saint Thomas Aquinas: Move a bead along every time you live out one of his virtues. Try to get to ten by the end of the week.
- Saint Ralph Sherwin: Move a bead along each time you act on something as soon as you see it needs doing. Try to move along five beads in a week.
- Saint Therese: Move a bead along every time you do an act of kindness or love. Try to get to ten each day.



'HOLINESS'

# GIVING



This week our theme is giving. In reflecting on our theme we can be inspired by the life of Saint Martin of Tours whose memoria we celebrate this week (11th November). He is famous for literally cutting his cloak to give it to someone in need. His ability to be generous and to look after those around him can inspire us all. Think this week about how you can give to others - what do the people around you need?

## SEE

*Find out a bit more about Saint Martin of Tours and how he can inspire us to be more giving:*

[The Life of Saint Martin of Tours in 60 seconds](#)

*What examples of giving can you see in this video?*

[Life Vest Inside - Kindness Boomerang - "One Day"](#)

*What example could we take from this?*

## HEAR

*Matthew 25:40: Whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sisters you do for me.*

*Corinthians 9:7: Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

*Proverbs 11:25: A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.*

## THINK

*True generosity is giving simply to give, loving simply to love, uplifting simply to uplift. When we consider whether we practise generosity in our day to day lives, it's important to reflect and ask ourselves why we give and what we expect to receive through giving. Only we can answer that very difficult question. We are all interconnected and the skills, talents, connections we have are not meant to be hoarded, they are meant to be shared. What talents and gifts do you have that you can share and give to others?*

## DO

*Write down something you can do to give to others this week. It may be bringing in or raising money for a school or class charity, or it could be giving your time to help someone. Write the thing you are going to do into your planner for some time over the next week, so that you don't forget to do it. Your teacher will tell you what day you are going to need to complete your action by, so that you can have a chat about what difference it made!*

## MISSION *suggestions*

Carry out your act of giving!  
Maybe you could make this a regular thing?



**'GIVING'**

# YOUTH

This week we focus on the word Youth. Every year on the solemnity of Christ the King, the Church focuses on you, its young people, and celebrates everything that you bring to the world. Youth is not just about age however - it's about our attitude.

This week, think about what it's like being a young person in today's world - is it easy? What difference can you make to the world around you?

All around us we witness young people changing the world. However, we also see many situations where young people are not given the opportunity to flourish. Even though the word of the week is Youth, giving young people the opportunity to play a central role in creating God's Kingdom is a day to day, month to month, year to year duty that all adults should give young people the chance to fulfil.

## SEE & HEAR

*Listen to what Pope Francis says about DOCAT in this video.*

*What is DOCAT? Do you have any copies in school already? Can you get your school to order some copies?*

*Listen to the presenters of Catholic Central talk about the sacrament of Confirmation.*

*Is this something you would think about doing on your faith journey? If so perhaps speak to someone in your school or church who could help (lay chaplain, head of RE, catechist).*

## THINK

*Read one of these pieces and think about what it means for you*

- *Jesus calls the children*
- *Read the words of Pope Francis: 'Youth is for taking risks, good risks, risks full of hope. It is meant to be staked on great things. Youth is meant to be given away, to help others to know the Lord. Don't keep your youth to yourselves: get out there!'*
  - *What 'good risks' will you take in your life? Spend some time dreaming about what they might be and what impact they might have on the world.*
  -

*Watch this short video about Blessed Carlo Acutis Secondary Primary*

- *What was special about Carlo?*
- *How does Carlo compare to the stereotype of a teenage boy?*
- *What can we learn from him?*

*The 'Faith in Action' award is a way to encourage young people to live out their faith and to help others. Ask a member of staff to support you in starting the Faith in Action award: <https://www.ndcys.com/faithinaction/>*

## DO

- *Join in with National Youth Funday this Friday. Your lay chaplain, or chaplaincy lead, will have a timetable to show all of the activities you can join in with on the day.*
- *Create a short video or poster that shows off the talents and gifts of the children / young people in your class or school.*

## MISSION *suggestions*

As young people, you are full of energy and positivity (even though you may not always feel that way). Think about one thing you could do to change the world around you, even if it feels risky.

Could you:

- support a charity?
- help another student in school?
- learn about other young people like Blessed Carlo Acutis or Greta Thunberg and try to follow their example?
- get involved in community groups that work to make the world a fairer place?



'YOUTH'

# KINGDOM



We are called to build the Kingdom of God. Not out of bricks and stone but out of each other - we are living stones. Christ came to establish the Kingdom of God here on earth and this week, in the lives of the saints we celebrate, we see people who give everything they had to build the Kingdom of God.

*'So then, anyone who hears these words of mine and obeys them is like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain poured down, the rivers flooded over, and the wind blew hard against that house. But it did not fall, because it was built on rock. But anyone who hears these words of mine and does not obey them is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain poured down, the rivers flooded over, the wind blew hard against that house, and it fell. And what a terrible fall that was!' Matthew 7:24-27*

When we reflect on what the Kingdom of God is, and how we are part of the building crew, we should remember what Matthew says. We need to build a kingdom that is motivated by a recognition that all people are created in the image and likeness of God. This means we are co-builders of a kingdom where all people should be given the opportunity to flourish and reach their potential.

## SEE

*Look at this quotation from Pope Francis.*

'The Kingdom of God is in your midst. It is not spectacular. It grows in silence in hiding, through witness, prayer, and the attraction of the Spirit.

*What do you think he is telling us to do as we work to create the Kingdom of God?*

## HEAR

*Read the beatitudes and pick one that speaks to you about creating God's Kingdom. How could you live it out?*

*'Matthew 5:3-12*

## THINK

*Reflect on these questions yourself or discuss these questions with someone in your class.*

- *If you could imagine a kingdom where everyone was treated as a valuable person created in the 'image and likeness of God', what would it look like? Can you create a poster or poem to express this view?*
- *What do you do in your life that shows you are living according to the Beatitudes? Can you think of an example?*
- *What can you do to create God's Kingdom? Maybe you could start in your class or school, or your local community - how could you make people feel valued and loved in our 'Kingdom'?*

## DO

*Is there a Catholic or Christian charity you could support that supports those who are marginalised or even persecuted?*

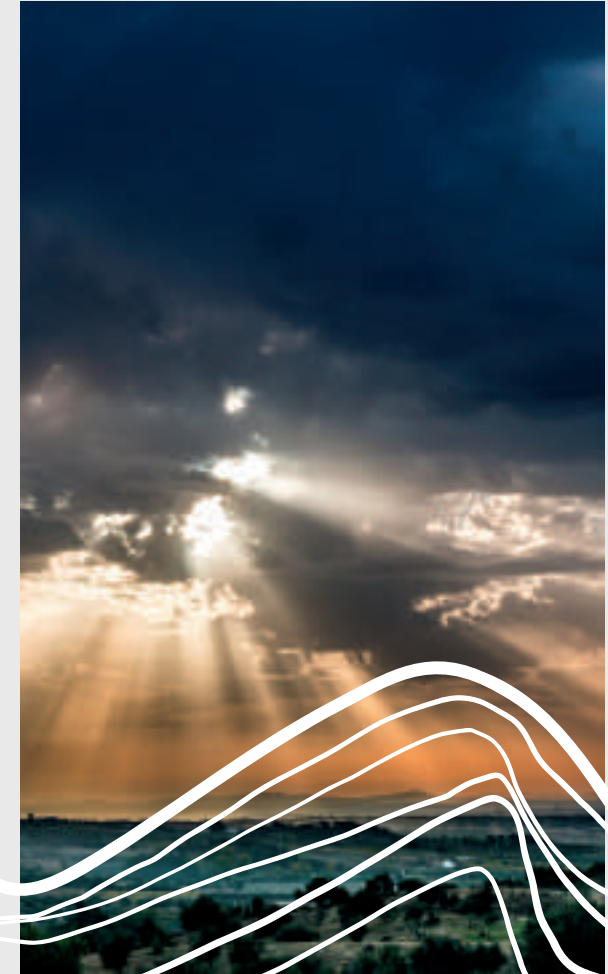
- *SVP, Mini Vinnies (Primary), CAFOD, The Columban Missionaries, Is there something you could do at school to raise awareness about Fairtrade?, Support a local food bank to make sure that everyone has access to food and important supplies*

*This following resource can be used to support any work you do with the homeless:*

## MISSION suggestions

Your mission this week is to follow one of the beatitudes.

Is it a beatitude that will make a difference to your own life and faith?  
Is it a beatitude that will change the way you treat those around you?  
Is it a beatitude that asks you to try to make the world a fairer place?



'KINGDOM'

# HOPE

This week is the first week of Advent and our theme this week is Hope. This first week of Advent is a chance for us to look ahead towards Christmas, when God gives us the perfect gift of His Son, Jesus. By doing this God gives us hope for the future, knowing that Jesus will be with us along every step of our journey. Perhaps, this week, we could also think about what we hope for this week and take some time to offer it up to God.

## SEE

[Click here to take a look at these images.](#)

How do they represent hope? Maybe you could talk to the person next to you about what some of the images mean to you and how they might represent hope to you?

## HEAR

The Bible is full of messages of hope. Have a look at some of these pieces of scripture and think about what they have in common.

What is the hope which they speak of?

What is God saying to us?

- [Jeremiah 29:11](#)
- [Romans 15:13](#)
- [Romans 8:24-25](#)
- [1 Corinthians 13:13](#)

## THINK

**(Primary):** When you hope for something, it makes it even more special when it happens. Can you think of something which you have hoped for and then it has happened? How do you think Mary must have been feeling when she hoped for her baby? What do you hope for in your life? Let's take some time to think about that now and talk to God about it.

**(Secondary):** Hope is an important thing; it can keep us feeling positive, or looking forward to something, when times are hard. It is more than just wishing for something though, like with a genie, it's about looking forward to a better future. What do you hope for? It could be for your own life, or for others. Let's take some time to think about that and then offer it up to God.



## DO

*Taking inspiration from the images we've looked at, create your own image of hope. Help someone else to Encounter Him this week by sharing and explaining your image to your class or table, or by putting your images of hope up around school to inspire others.*

## MISSION *suggestions*

Could you bring hope to members of your local community? Speak to your lay chaplain or teacher - maybe you could take some of your images of hope to decorate a section of your local church or a local residential home for the elderly?

Could you share the gift of hope by writing a letter to a refugee child, maybe including your image of hope? [Here is a website which could help you to do that.](#)



'HOPE'

# PEACE

God gave himself to the world, not as a powerful king but as a tiny baby. He brought a message of peace and humility to a world that needed it more than ever. Think this week about peace in our world. Does everybody live in peaceful communities? This week let's try to remember that especially during Advent we are called to bring the peace of Christ to everyone we meet.

## SEE

CAFOD has produced this video to help us to pray for peace. Take some time today as a class to watch it and pray for peace around the world and in our own classrooms and communities:

## HEAR

Our world and lives are very busy, often full of talking and noise. Sometimes it is nice to take some time to be quiet and at peace. It might be a chance to listen to, or talk to, God or to switch off your mind for a few moments. Take some time to close your eyes and be silent today - how long can you do it for?!

### Scripture

- Matthew 5:9: 'Happy are those who work for peace; God will call them his children!'
  - What does this tell us that we should do in our lives?
  - How could you be a peacemaker? Can you think of some examples?
- John 14:27: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.'
  - What do you think Jesus means here?
  - Why is Jesus' peace different to the peace we might get from the world?

## THINK

Think about what you might be able to do to share the peace of Christ with others.

Can you share with the people in your class a time when you have felt peaceful?

## DO

**(Primary)** Could you plan a liturgy this week for your class, school or year group on peace? CAFOD have some ideas here which you might be able to use: [Peace liturgy for primary schools](#)

**(Secondary)** Here is an activity which will help you to think about the importance of peace in our world, using some real life examples to set the scene: [GCSE Peacemaking CST, scripture and case studies FOR INSET](#)

## MISSION suggestions

Pray the rosary this week to pray for peace in our world. This could be in class if your teacher organises it, in the chapel led by your lay chaplain, or in your own time.

[A resource which might help you with this](#)



'PEACE'

# JOY

The third week of Advent is centred on joy. We celebrate Gaudete Sunday to remind us of the joy of Christmas that is almost here. It's a great chance to think about what brings us joy in our lives and to give thanks for it. It's also an opportunity to reflect on how we can bring joy to those around us and make the world a more joyful place for everyone!

## SEE

*We are told in the bible that God wants us to be happy, that we should rejoice, to be filled with joy! Let's hear a bit more about why in this video: [Francis Chan — God Wants You To Be Joyful](#)*

*Joy is also one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Let's watch this video and think about what joy is and why God wants us to be joyful (primary) [Joy\\_1](#). [The Fruit of The Spirit for Kids](#)*

## HEAR & THINK

*Philippians 4:4 - 'Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!'*

*John 15:11 - 'I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.'*

*John 16:24 - 'Until now you have not asked for anything in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your happiness may be complete.'*

*Matthew 13:44 - 'The Kingdom of heaven is like this. A man happens to find a treasure hidden in a field. He covers it up again, and is so happy that he goes and sells everything he has, and then goes back and buys that field.'*

*Listen to ['Put on a happy face'](#) and have a [look at the lyrics](#)*

- How do you think it links to this week's theme?
- What do you think we could learn from it?

*Listen to ['Happy'](#) by Pharell Williams and [read the lyrics](#)*

- How does this song link with this week's theme?
- What was the last thing which made you feel as happy as the singer talks about in the chorus?
- Let's take some time to thank God for the things which bring us joy and happiness - God wants us to be happy!

## DO

*Take some time to think about what makes you happy and thank God for it. You could use this worksheet to help you.*

*Or perhaps you could write one thing which makes you happy on a piece of paper and add it to the prayer board in your classroom and then pray together as a class to say thank you for all of those things.*

## MISSION *suggestions*

It is important for us to share our joy with others and to make other people joyful. Write a note to give to someone else to make them happy today. Maybe your note could contain a complement, or a joke? Give it to someone in another class, on the playground or at home to make them joyful.



**'JOY'**

# LOVE

In the final week of Advent, we focus on love. The love Joseph had for Mary, the love they had for Jesus, and the love God showed the world when he gave us his only son. Jesus' birth inspires us to always share God's love for us with other people. Whom do you love, and how do you show it?

## SEE

*Here are some videos about love. What can we learn from them about how we can act with love in our own lives?*

**(Primary)** *Some children talk here about loving Jesus and others.*

*Love isn't just a feeling, it is about our actions. Let's hear a bit about that here.*

- *How could you put love into action?*
- *Can you think of some examples of how you could show love to the people around you?*
- *When have you been shown love by someone else? What impact did it have on you?*

*What is love, and where does God fit in?*

**(Secondary)** *What is love? What does it mean?*

## HEAR & THINK

*Read one of the following pieces of scripture and think about what it is teaching us:*

- *Mark 12:30 - 31 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this, you shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.'*
- *1 Corinthians 13:4-8 'Love is patient and kind, love does not envy or boast...'*
- *1 Corinthians 16:4 'Let all you do be done in love...'*
- *1 John 4:8 'Anyone who does not love, does not know God because God is love...'*
- *Colossians 3:14 'And above all these, put on love which binds everything together in perfect harmony.'*

## DO

*Write a letter of affirmation for someone telling them how much you love or care for them. This could be a friend, a family member or a classmate.*

*Could people in your class write a 'letter of love' to a refugee?*

## MISSION *suggestions*

Hide notes of love around school to let people know how much God loves them.



'LOVE'



ROMAN CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF NOTTINGHAM